

Environmental factors and academic staff performance in public universities in rivers state

Okai N. Okai¹

¹*Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria*

Email: ikennafather@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study is on environmental factors and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State. Literatures relating to the study were reviewed for expert opinions. The purpose of the study is to examine how the environmental factors can facilitate the job performance of academic staff. Three research questions guided the study and three research hypotheses were postulated and statistically tested. ANOVA was used in testing the hypotheses of the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire that was structured on Likert 4 point scale. The instrument was validated and the reliability was determined. The result of the study showed that physical facilities such as classrooms, office accommodation, and provision of health facilities influences the performance of academic staff in public universities, there was a significant relationship between physical facilities and academic staff performance; there was a significant relationship between the security of university environment and academic staff performance, there was a significant relationship between the provision of health facilities and academic staff performance in public universities. It was concluded that the university environments promote the effective performance of academic staff in the university. Recommendation among others include: that the university should provide more and adequate physical facilities, the university management should take the issue of security of staff more seriously, and staff should be educated on the use of facilities.

Keywords: Environment, factors, academic staff, performance, public universities, rivers, state.

1. INTRODUCTION

University is a citadel of learning. It is an institution at the highest point or level of education, it is an institution where one can study for a degree. In this regard, you can study for a bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctor of philosophy. It is a community of scholars, in other words it is a place where both Senior and Junior lecturers carry out research to proper solutions to the problems that plague the society.

Uwokwami (2010), stated that academic are generally seen as custodian of knowledge, and furthermore, the academic staff are seen as the link between the students and the knowledge. The roles of the academic staff in the teaching and learning process cannot be over-estimated; this is because the academic staff are experts in their field or areas of study and so, they have a fundamental duties to help the students to learn and to gain new knowledge. The role of the academic staff is very crucial in supporting the teaching and learning process, especially ensuring that the learning experience of both the young and adult learners is rich for sustainable development.

The academic staff are the core elements in the educational system in which the university is inclusive (Babson, 2012). This is true because they are the factors for effective implementation of university policy and programmes. Akpasi (2011) posited that the academic staff of the university are the major elements that implements the university curriculum. As a corollary, James (2014) stated that the extent to which the lecturers perform their duties in the universities largely depend on the university environment. University environment has been described as the condition that influence performance of the staff. This suggest that university environment affect the behaviour of staff and students, it will equally influence development in the university system. Ajeke (2013), noted that university environment

may be pleasant or it may be unpleasant. The learning environment can affect both the lecturers and students positively and negatively.

Izeuma (2015) posited that the extent to which the academic staff can display maximum performance in the university system is dependent on various factors such as the availability of physical facilities. The physical facilities are to support teaching and learning, the security and safety of both staff and students are also crucial factors. It is interesting to state that the safety and security of university environment will help the staff and students to work without fear. The goals of the university system cannot be achieved in the situation of insecurity and other crises. Meshilekachi (2011) noted that the security of life and property in the university system is paramount in the attainment of university goal.

Majiuzu (2014) noted that the physical environment of university is an essential component of the safety hence the environment is meant to promote safety. This implies that the university environment must be conducive for teaching and learning. From all indication the safety and security of school environment will increase the performance of staff (Uzhizekachi 2018). An environment that promote safety and security will go a long way in stimulating teaching and learning. Chukwuemeka (2016), asserted that the safety of lives and physical facilities must guaranteed to facilitate a good learning environment. This was supported by Uwokwanichi (2018) who posited that staff of the university system will perform very well then they are sure of their safety and security.

It is imperative to beef up the security situation of the university organization, this is because the rate at which the university staff and students are being molarity is very alarming. It would be recalled that the activities of the man of the secret cult ha excused some lecturers to go to other universities where they face that they are safe and secured. Furthermore, the provision of physical facilities in terms of classroom, desks, office accommodation, pleasure parks, hostel accommodation vis-à-vis health facilities such as good toilets, clinic and goods sanitary system will spur both staff and students to greater performance that will eventually result to greater productivity. By implication, the university environment can make the staff to be productive or counter productive; Okon (2014), noted that the managers of the school should not ignore the importance of the school environment in the realization of the specific goals of the university. From all indications, the productive life of university staff or personals in any state, region or country is directly and indirectly influenced by the condition of the school environment.

Emmanuel (2013), asserted that the condition of the situation of university environment is the extent to which the university setting promotes safety for both students, teaching staff and other staff. The academic staff most part of time in the school environment, therefore, as a matter of fact they need to be provided with an environment that will stimulate their interest for research, teaching and other academic activities.

Parents and stakeholders to university education have a higher expectations from the academic staff it is hoped that if the university environment is provided with necessary facilities and security of the staff and students are guaranteed there is the livelihood that the lecturers will rise up to their responsibility.

It is against this backdrop that this study on university environment and academic staff performance in Rivers State is carried out with a view to determining the influence of university environment on staff performance.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

University is a social organisation with some specific functions such as teaching, research and community service. In the contemporary society the university system is seen as one of the agents that shapes the destiny of man and that of the nation. The effectiveness of the university system in the achievement of its stated goals depends on the performance of the staff.

The thrust of the matter is the fact that poor environment of the university is a serious threat to the performance of staff. Particularly, the academic staff. This is because the situation of security challenge and consequent upon the poor provision of facilities will adversely affect the ability of the staff especially during teaching and learning process. The situation of poor environment will make the academic staff to face in secured and as such they will be working into fear. It is interesting to state that working with fears will result to poor performance. Finally poor performance of staff will eventually result to poor goal attainment.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. How does physical facilities in the university environment enhance academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State?
2. How does the security of university environment enhance the academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State?
3. How does the provision of health facilities enhance the academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State?

4. HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were postulated and statistically tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between the provision of physical facilities and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between the security of university environment and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant relationship between the provision of health facilities and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This work is anchored on peace and security theory by Forster (1982). This theory support that social organizations needs peace and security to be able to persons its stated goals and objectives. This theory is relevant to this study because the university environment must be safe and secured for a meaningful academic activity to take place.

6. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlational design, this design is an attempt to show the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The population of the study was 1200, this consist of academic staff drawn from some selected departments of the three public universities in Rivers State. The sample of the study was 120 persons making 10% of the total population. The sampling technique that was adopted was stratified sampling and simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire structured on the modified Likert 4 point scaling Pattern. The validity of the instrument was determined by some experts in Educational Management and as well as measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined through the test-retest method, using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, an index of 0.83 was established. The mean and standard deviation was used to analysed the research questions while the Analysis of variance was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

7. RESULTS

Research Question 1: How does physical facilities in the university environment enhance academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State?

Table 1.1: Influence of Physical facilities in University environment on staff performance.

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSES				\bar{x}	STD Dev	REMARKS
		SA	A	DIS	SDISA			
1.	Office accommodation enhances my performance.	28	42	28	82	2.71	.63	Agreed
2.	Lecture halls enhances my performance	32	41	29	51	2.82	.60	Agreed
3.	The provision of hostel accommodation for students enhance my	37	43	17	53	2.91	.66	Agreed

	performance						
4.	The provision of library materials enhances my performance	31	44	11	22	2.56	.61
5.	The provision of instructional materials enhances my performance	41	52	10	11	3.01	1.09
6.	The provision of laboratory equipment enhance my performance	41	43	16	22	2.81	.71
7.	The provision of materials for workshop and students enhance my performance	41	42	11	13	2.93	.66
	Aggregate mean						

Table 1.1 shows the response of the respondents on the influence of physical facilities on the performance of academic staff of public universities in Rivers State. A cursory look at the table shows that all the items in the table above the criterion mean of 2.5, this suggest acceptance. The implication is that the variables under investigation influenced the performance of academic staff in public universities in Rivers State, the mean scores of 2.71, 2.82, 2.91, 2.56, 3.01, 2.81 and 2.93 support the acceptance of these variables as factors that influence the performance of staff.

Research Question 2: How the security of university environment enhance the academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State?

Table 1.2: The influence of the security of University Environment on academic staff performance.

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSES				\bar{x}	STD Dev	REMARKS
		SA	A	DIS	SDISA			
1.	Security in the office enhances my performance	41	38	21	11	2.68	1.63	Agreed
2.	My security in the classroom during teaching and learning process enhance my performance	44	41	11	9	2.71	1.66	Agreed
3.	My security in the library enhance my performance	37	51	10	8	2.92	1.74	Agreed
4.	My security in laboratory enhance my performance	63	41	11	7	2.62	1.62	Agreed
5.	My security in the workshop and studies enhance my performance	53	47	10	9	2.91	1.48	Agreed
6.	My security in the staff canteen enhance my performance.	48	52	9	8	2.94	1.11	Agreed
7.	My security in the university auditorium enhance my performance	51	50	11	7	2.63	1.61	Agreed
	Aggregate mean							

Table 1.2 shows the response of the respondents on the influence of security on the academic staff performance in Public universities in Rivers State. A close look at the table show that all the variables under investigation had a mean scores that are above the criterion mean of 2.5. This could be seen in terms of the mean scores of 2.68, 2.71, 2.92, 2.62, 2.91, 2.94 and 2.63. This implies that all the factors as

identified in the table bears a strong influence in the performance of academic staff in public universities in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: How does the provision of health facilities enhance the academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State?

Table 1.3: The influence of health facilities on the academic staff performance in universities.

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSES				\bar{x}	STD Dev	REMARKS
		SA	A	DIS	SDISA			
1.	The provision of toilets in office enhance my performance.	31	48	11	9	2.51	0.47	Agreed
2.	The provision of clinic in the school enhance my performance.	52	51	9	2	2.63	0.62	Agreed
3.	The provision of first extinguisher enhance my performance	41	47	11	12	2.71	1.61	Agreed
4.	The provision of ambulance enhance my performance	48	51	9	11	2.83	1.41	Agreed
5.	The provision of cleanliness enhance my performance	51	51	11	8	2.62	1.09	Agreed
6.	The provision of recreational facilities for relaxation enhance my performance	51	53	9	7	2.81	1.21	Agreed
Aggregate mean								

Table 1.3 shows the responses of respondents on the influence of health facilities on the academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State. A critical look at the table shows that all the indices in the table are above the criterion mean of 2.5 which is the point of acceptance. From the analysis the variables show, a mean score of 2.51, 2.63, 2.71, 2.83, 2.62 and 2.81. This suggest that all the indicators influence the academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the provision of physical facilities and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.

Table 1.4: Summary of relationship between physical facilities and academic staff performance in Rivers State.

Model Summary

Model	R	R. Square	Adjusted R Square	Std error of estimate
1	.183	0.031	.026	.27067

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	f	Significance
Regression	.0814	1	.814		
Residual	32.600	118	.089	12.60	.002
Total	34.615	119			

Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Significance
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.753	.108		14.34	.000
Mean Physical facilities	.144	.043	.174	3.47	.001

Table 1.4 shows that the regression correlation coefficient (R) indicates that the linear relationship between the physical facilities and academic staff is .183. This suggest that there is a significant relationship between physical facilitation and academic staff performance. R square equals 0.031 while adjusted R square equals .026. ANOVA and standized beta coefficient produced f (1,118) = 12.601. The beta values shows a positive correlation between physical facilities and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the security of university environment and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.

Table 1.5: Summary of relationship between security of university environment and academic staff performance in Rivers State.

Model Summary

Model	R	R. Square	Adjusted R Square	Std error of estimate
1	.196	.041	.037	.37160

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	f	Significance
Multiple Regression		1	2.143		
Residual		118	.076	13.601	.000
Total	34.615	119			

Model	Coefficient				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Significance
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.843	.101	0.99	18.167	.000
Mean Physical facilities	.091	.052		1.724	.088

Table 1.6 shows that the multiple regression correlation coefficient (R) indicates that the linear relationship between the security of university environment and academic staff performance is .196. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the security of university environment and academic staff performance. R square equals .041 while adjusted R square equals .037. ANOVA and standized beta coefficient produced f (1,118). Therefore, the null hypotheses rejected and the alternate accepted.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between the provision of health facilities and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.

Table 1.6: Summary of relationship between the provision of health facilities and academic staff performance in Rivers State.

Model Summary

Model	R	R. Square	Adjusted R Square	Std error of estimate
1	.193	.039	.038	.29386

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	f	Significance
Regression	.0236	1	.236		
Residual	31.377	377	.081	2.937	.086
Total	31.623	378			

Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Significance
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.571	.123	-.194	22.079	.000
Mean Physical facilities	- 177	.048		-3.722	.000

Table 1.6 shows that the multiple regression correlation coefficient (R) indicates that the linear relationship between the provision of health facilities and academic staff in public universities in Rivers State is .193. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the provision of health facilities and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State. R square equals .039 while adjusted R square is .038. ANOVA and standized beta coefficient produced f (1,377), therefore, the null hypotheses was rejected and the alternate hypotheses was accepted. This shows that there was a significant relationship.

8. DISCUSSION

The study showed that university environment play an important role in the academic staff performance in public universities particularly Rivers State. From the analysis, physical facilities, provision of health facilities, security of university environment appeared to have influence on academic staff performance. Based on the regression statistical analysis, physical facilities and health facilities r value in relation to academic staff performance is ($r = 183$, $r^2 = 196$) respectively.

ANOVA Produced $f(1,118) = 11.608$, $p < 0.05$ and $f(1,118) = 14.607$, $p < 0.05$ and $f(1,118) = 14.607$, $p < 0.05$ respectively, shows that there is a significant relationship between physical facilities, health facilities and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.

9. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on the data analysis the following findings are made:

1. The provision of good office accommodation enhance the performance of academic staff in public universities.
2. The provision of instructional materials enhances the performance of academic staff
3. The provision of laboratory equipment influences the performances of academic staff.
4. The security of academic staff in the school environment enhances their academic staff.
5. There is a significant relationship between physical facilities and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.
6. There is a significant relationship between security of university environment and academic performance in public university in Rivers State.
7. There is a significant relationship between the provision of health facilities and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.

10. CONCLUSION

University system is a citadel of learning, it is an institution of higher learning. Academic staff are the custodian of knowledge, and they are seen as experts in the various field of studies. An environment that promote safety and security will enhance or facilitate the performance of academic staff in the university. On this premise, physical facilities, such as classrooms, office blocks, chairs, laboratory will help the staff in their job performance. It is essentially necessary to state that facilities such as toilet facilities and recreations will also give comfort to the staff.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The university system should be provided with adequate physical facilities to enhance the performance of academic staff, particularly academic staff.
2. The university staff, particularly the academic staff should be given regular orientation on the use of facilities.
3. The adequate and regular provision of instructional materials will support teaching and learning.
4. The management of the university system should take the security of staff seriously by seeking up the security of the university environment.
5. There is need to provide recreational centre for both staff and students.
6. Toilet facilities should be provided for staff in or near their office.

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